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UZBEKISTAN'S PARLIAMENT IN THE MIRZIYOYEV ERA: REFORMS AND EXPANSION OF OVERSIGHT POWERS

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the reforms of the parliamentary system of the Republic of Uzbekistan during the presidency of Shavkat Mirziyoyev (2016–present). The study examines how the Oliy Majlis has evolved from a primarily legislative body into an institution actively participating in political decision-making. Special attention is given to the expansion of parliamentary oversight mechanisms, the introduction of the "Government Hour" institute, the legal basis for oversight functions, and recommendations for further strengthening the parliament's role in national governance.

Keywords: parliament, Oliy Majlis, parliamentary oversight, Mirziyoyev, Government Hour, political decision-making, constitutional reform, rule of law.

АННОТАЦИЯ

В данной статье анализируются реформы парламентской системы Республики Узбекистан в период президентства Шавката Мирзиёева (2016 — по настоящее время). Исследуется трансформация Олий Мажлиса из преимущественно законодательного органа в институт, активно участвующий в принятии политических решений. Особое внимание уделяется расширению механизмов парламентского контроля, институту «Правительственного часа», правовой базе надзорных функций и рекомендациям по дальнейшему укреплению роли парламента.

Ключевые слова: парламент, Олий Мажлис, парламентский надзор, Мирзиёев, Правительственный час, принятие политических решений, конституционная реформа, верховенство права.

INTRODUCTION

After the second President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, came to power in 2016, he began a significant modernization of the parliamentary system of the Republic of Uzbekistan. During this period, the parliament became not only a legislative body, but also an institution actively participating in making political decisions. During Mirziyoyev's rule, the powers of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan were expanded and the strengthening of control functions was determined. He put forward the principle that "the state bodies should serve the people, not the people serve the state bodies" [1]. Since 2017, President Mirziyoyev began to

send an annual Address to the Oliy Majlis. His first Address was held on December 22, 2017, and it was planned that the Address would cover key reforms in all areas. In subsequent years, the Addresses have shaped national development, with particular attention paid to supporting entrepreneurship and innovation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent literature pays particular attention to the reform period under Shavkat Mirziyoyev, where the parliament's role in political decision-making has been expanded. His policy initiatives and annual addresses to the Oliy Majlis are frequently cited as key drivers of institutional change. Scholars note an increased emphasis on accountability, transparency, and parliamentary oversight, including the introduction of mechanisms such as "Government Hour". Comparative studies suggest that while Uzbekistan has made progress in strengthening its legislative branch, challenges remain in ensuring effective implementation of oversight functions. Researchers also highlight the growing role of political parties and parliamentary committees in the law-making process. However, gaps between formal institutional design and practical execution continue to be a subject of academic debate.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive scientific approach was used in this study. The role of parliament in political decision-making in the Mirziyoyev era was studied through the method of systematic analysis. The legal foundations of parliamentary oversight were revealed through the analysis of regulatory and legal documents, including the Law 'On Parliamentary Oversight' and related legislative acts. Using the method of comparative analysis, Uzbekistan's parliamentary oversight system was compared with international experience. Scientific conclusions and practical proposals were developed based on the generalization method.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The legal basis for parliamentary oversight of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan is enshrined in the Laws 'On the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan', 'On the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan', 'On the Regulations of the Legislative Chamber', 'On the Regulations of the Senate', 'On the Status of a Deputy of the Legislative Chamber and a Member of the Senate', 'On Parliamentary Oversight' and other legal documents. The Law 'On Parliamentary Oversight', adopted in 2016, regulates relations in the field of organization and implementation of parliamentary oversight and clearly defines the subjects, objects and forms of parliamentary oversight [2].

According to the Law, the subjects of parliamentary oversight are: the Legislative Chamber; the Senate; Committees and commissions of both chambers; Political party factions; Deputies and Members of the Senate; and the Human Rights Representative of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Ombudsman) [3]. In accordance with Article 4 of the Law, the activities of state power and administrative bodies and their officials in implementing the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan are subject to parliamentary control. Forms of parliamentary control include: review of the state budget execution; review of the annual report of the Cabinet of

Ministers; hearing of the Prime Minister on urgent socio-economic issues; hearing reports from regional governors at Senate meetings; hearing reports from heads of diplomatic missions; hearing the report of the Accounts Chamber; hearing the report of the Prosecutor General; hearing the report of the Chairman of the Central Bank; and requests from deputies and senators.

In the process of developing the Strategy of Actions in five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021, the main attention was paid to fundamental reforms of the state and society [4]. On July 12, 2017, at a videoconference meeting with deputies of the Oliy Majlis, political parties, and representatives of the Ecological Movement of Uzbekistan, President Mirziyoyev put forward ideas on the need to expand the objects of parliamentary oversight and introduce the "Government Hour" institute [2]. Based on these goals, within the framework of the Action Strategy, the Law 'On Parliamentary Oversight' was supplemented with norms strengthening the practical significance of parliamentary oversight in 2017-2021 [5].

In connection with the democratization of the procedure for forming the government and strengthening its responsibility, amendments and addenda were introduced to Articles 79, 93, 98 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and to the Laws 'On the Cabinet of Ministers', 'On the Senate of the Oliy Majlis' and 'On the Regulations of the Legislative Chamber' [6]. In improving the country's public administration, the main attention was paid to increasing the accountability of the government to the parliament, expanding the powers of the legislative body based on the principles of separation and mutual restraint of powers. The procedure for approving candidates for Deputy Prime Ministers, ministers, and chairmen of state committees by the Legislative Chamber was established.

The Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis organized a 'Government Hour' to hear reports from officials of state administration bodies. The powers of the Oliy Majlis to ensure parliamentary control over the implementation of important tasks related to the country's domestic and foreign policy have been further expanded. The Senate introduced the practice of listening to reports from ambassadors of Uzbekistan to foreign countries. The practice of monthly visits of members of parliament to their elected territory has been introduced. Control by deputies over the activities of local executive authorities has been strengthened, and a permanent secretariat of local councils of people's deputies has been established.

In order to ensure effective parliamentary control over the state budget, the State Budget Department was established in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis to provide deputies and senators with professional, independent and impartial information, analytical and expert services.

CONCLUSION

Despite the vast experience accumulated over many years of practice, it is necessary to constantly improve the activities of the parliament. In modern societies, the role of the parliament as a center representing social interests is increasing. The position of parliament as a democratic value is determined by its ability to quickly adapt to new conditions. There is no ready-made model of building a democratic parliament for Uzbekistan. Both Western and Eastern models have their positive and negative sides. Uzbekistan needs to form its own unique parliamentary model,

appropriate to its history, culture, national values and geopolitical location, and this process is taking place now.

Clear and enforceable mechanisms should be introduced that would oblige ministers and heads of state agencies to regularly report to parliament. Ensuring the diversity of the composition of the parliament — the balanced representation of young people, women, people of different professions, and regions — will increase the quality of political representation. It is recommended to introduce quotas and incentive mechanisms. It is also necessary to study and adapt the experience of the European Parliament, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, and the parliaments of South Korea and Japan, establishing permanent inter-institutional cooperation.

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